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Press Conference “Jubilee 2025: aims reached and projects”

This morning, the press conference “**Jubilee 2025: aims reached and projects**” was livestreamed from the Holy See Press Office, San Pio X Hall, Via dell’Ospedale 1.

The speakers were: Archbishop Rino Fisichella, pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, Section for Fundamental Questions regarding Evangelization in the World, and Msgr. Graham Bell, under-secretary of the Dicastery for Evangelization, Section for Fundamental Questions regarding Evangelization in the World.

The following are their interventions:

Interventions of Archbishop Rino Fisichella and Msgr. Graham Bell

H.E. Msgr. Rino Fisichella – *Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, Section for the Fundamental Questions of Evangelization in the World*

As you may recall, on February 11, 2022, Pope Francis wrote me a Letter in which he charged the then Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization with the preparation and celebration of the ordinary Jubilee of 2025.

From that moment we rolled up our sleeves, because the time available for such an event is always very tight, despite the fact that we all know that a Jubilee is celebrated every 25 years. First of all, relations have begun with the Italian government, the Lazio Region, and the City of Rome. These collaborations have developed and intensified since the appointment of the Government Commissioner and the establishment of the 2025 Jubilee Agency. The Holy See has proposed a number of plans to facilitate the reception of the millions of pilgrims who will come to Rome on the occasion of the Jubilee, which have been met by civic entities.

This marked the start of a series of programmatic and operational "Roundtables" that periodically see the

Dicastery engaged with the Italian Government and the Government Commissioner in discussions for the realization of the structural works necessary for the city, but also for the resolution of the typical problems related to hosting, such as security, health, transportation, volunteer work and whatever else becomes necessary for the safe functioning of the Jubilee. The first bilateral meeting, which took place in the Hall of the Consistory last April 19, 2023, made it possible to verify the effective cooperation, and the common understanding, for the successful outcome of the upcoming Jubilee.

This challenging path, which involves the ability to be able to look together even if from different perspectives, will soon be reflected in the start of the works that will keep the city of Rome busy in the coming months. Certainly, we understand the difficulties that will be faced by residents and tourists, who will be forced to use alternative routes to get around the city because of the presence of the construction sites. But we are equally sure that all of us will soon be able, once the works are completed, to live in a city that is even more beautiful, more welcoming, renewed in its artistic works and more easily enjoyed by all, because of the improved routes and new infrastructure that will be integrated into the fabric of the city.

This more technical but, as you can imagine, equally necessary preparatory phase is proceeding in parallel with the one more closely related to the celebration of the Jubilee event. The Dicastery, in fact, is marching in full stride for the preparation of the Holy Year, implementing some initiatives of which I am pleased to share the first achieved results. These are some goals that may seem obvious, but are fundamental to the achievement of positive results for the Jubilee's development.

Four Commissions and a Technical Committee were established in recent months to support the Dicastery in outlining the general program. First of all, the Pastoral Commission, a working group composed of representatives of each Dicastery of the Roman Curia and pastoral referents of some ecclesial realities, with bishops, priests, consecrated persons and laity, whose purpose is to promote initiatives particularly in the local Churches for the most immediate preparation for the Jubilee.

The Cultural Commission contributes to the development of cultural activities of various kinds, including exhibitions, concerts and performances, which will accompany and enrich the spiritual experience of the pilgrims. A special task also is to evaluate the many projects that come in, to judge their consistency with the Jubilee event and their effective implementation. Besides, Rome has always been a cultural attraction, and our aim is that the pilgrim may also become a tourist, just as the tourist may be fascinated by the pilgrim experience. I can already announce an upcoming initiative in this regard. Starting next September, we will mount an exhibition with works by the great Spanish Renaissance artist, *El Greco*. Works that have never left Spain and are being made available for this very occasion, as if to give the official start to the cultural initiatives. This first "symbolic event" will help visitors to reflect on the theme of "hope in Christ," which helps human beings rise from their miseries with the expectancy of eternal Life. The exhibition will feature a theological "triptych" consisting of *El Greco's* three masterpieces, such as *The Baptism of Christ*, *Christ Carrying the Cross*, and *Christ Blessing ('The Saviour of the World')*.

Last December, the Tenth Edition of the exhibition, "100 Nativity Scenes in the Vatican," was intended to be part of the Jubilee initiatives. A great success for the International Exhibition in the Bernini Colonnade, which was attended by more than 120 thousand people. We want as much as possible for these events to have free access, in order to encourage the participation of citizens in the contemplation of beauty that allows a better relationship with the city and its people.

The Communications Commission brings together journalists from various newspapers, academics, and new media experts, for the Dicastery's support on the information and communication level.

Last but not least is the Ecumenical Commission, which will provide, not only support for inter-religious dialogue on the great theme of Hope, but also contribute with the Dicastery to the organization of the celebrations for the 17th centenary anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, which falls precisely in 2025. This is a highly significant anniversary for all Christians because the first Christological Council took place in Nicaea. In the operational part, the Dicastery will be supported by the Technical Committee, which is responsible for giving guidance on the

logistics of the Jubilee events, management of the Basilicas, security, health, and volunteers.

One further goal achieved was the involvement of Dioceses from all around the world. We have already met with the 212 delegates of the Italian dioceses and the 90 representatives of all the Bishops' Conferences, with the aim of creating a connection between the Dicastery and the local entities, and to have the full involvement of local realities. It will be a fruitful exchange for knowledge of universal initiatives as well as local ones that are reflected in community participation.

In preparation for the Jubilee Year, Pope Francis requested that 2023 be dedicated to the rediscovery of the four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council, for the 60th anniversary of the opening of its work. As you may recall, the Holy Father presided over a solemn celebration last October 11, in the presence of some priests who had directly experienced Vatican II. In order to help local churches in their catechetical, human and especially Christian formation paths, and to give younger people the opportunity to know and rediscover the central contents of the Council, the Dicastery published last December the "Council Notebooks". A series of 35 small volumes, on the contents of *Dei Verbum*, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, *Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes*, designed as very user-friendly aids, precisely to allow for greater circulation of the texts in the Christian community. The "Notebooks" have already been translated into Spanish by the Bishops' Conference under the title "Cuadernos del Concilio," and are also being translated by the Mexican Conference of Bishops, the Brazilian Conference of Bishops, the Czech Conference of Bishops, and in India for the English language.

Next year, 2024, again at the request of Pope Francis, will be dedicated to Prayer. The Church is setting out toward the Jubilee with the intention of promoting the centrality of Prayer, personal and communal. We are studying the possibility of a "School of Prayer," with pathways that would cover the vast world of Prayer. Additionally, in order to live this year to the fullest, the Dicastery will publish a series of tools that we have called "Notes on Prayer," to put our relationship with the Lord back at the center, so as to learn every day how to pray in a coherent way, sustained by the great Christian tradition.

"Pilgrims of hope", as already known, is the motto of the ordinary 2025 Jubilee. Its meaning was directly described by the Holy Father in the February 11 letter mentioned earlier. At the press conference on June 28, 2022, the official logo of the Jubilee Year was presented. It depicts humanity coming from the four corners of the Earth in the act of clinging to the Cross. The cross is in the shape of a sail, one of the signs of Christian Hope that carries with it the certainty of the victory of good over evil. A sail that imposes itself on the sea moved by the happenings of life. The cross ends in the shape of an anchor, another symbol of hope that brings confidence and security in life.

Another objective was met with the conclusion of the International Competition that ended last March 25, 2023, concerning the official Jubilee Anthem. There were 270 participants from 38 different countries. A curious fact: the average age of the composers who participated in the competition was about 48 years old. The text, which was to be set to music, was written by Prof. Pierangelo Sequeri, a theologian and musicologist who has composed world-renowned lyrics. An international commission convened in Rome last April 18, after a serious analysis of the musical scores, submitted of course anonymously, turned its attention to the winning text of the competition. It gives me great pleasure to officially announce the name of the winner on this occasion. The winner is Maestro Francesco Meneghello, from Mantua, to which we extend our thanks, appreciation and gratitude. For the occasion of this conference, the Pontifical Musical Chorus of the Sistine Chapel recorded a first edition of the hymn, which we present to you as a sneak preview.

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Msgr. Graham Bell – *Undersecretary of the Dicastery for Evangelization, Section for the Fundamental Questions regarding Evangelization in the World*

Another significant step we are taking is the Jubilee website that will be active and accessible to the public starting tomorrow at the link www.iubilaeum2025.va. The portal in 9 languages is functional and already presents some of the most important content for learning about the Jubilee event. It is a user-friendly window on

the Jubilee that can be easily used by everyone, youth, young people and adults. We can already see the Italian version directly. On the home page there is a video presentation, prepared by Rai Vaticano, whom we sincerely thank not only for the gift of the videos, but also for the various services they have produced in recent months to introduce the general public to the Jubilee event. Starting in September, by clicking on the "Participate" button, it will already be possible to register for the events and the pilgrimage to the Holy Door. Until the registration platform is active in the home page you will find the introduction video.

Scrolling down you will find information on the Holy Door of St. Peter's and the other Basilicas, as well as signs of the Jubilee and all the news being updated daily. Next to the news is the section with events, where the most immediate initiatives will always be highlighted so that the service is always up-to-date. Returning to the top menu, there is the latest news on the preparatory phase of the Jubilee, with the work of the Commissions and the possibility of consulting the names of the Jubilee delegates for the Dioceses of Italy and the International Bishops' Conferences. The possibility of organizing one's own pilgrimage within the city is also offered, with three pilgrimages proposed: the traditional pilgrimage of St. Philip Neri with the Seven Churches; the pilgrimage on the churches dedicated to the Women Doctors of the Church and Patrons of Europe; and the *Iter Europaeum*, that is, the 28 Churches in 27 different European countries, plus the church that represents the European Union. Tools are being prepared to better introduce pilgrims into these paths, and to promote knowledge of the works of art in the various churches. An important effort carried out in agreement with the Ministry of Tourism, which will encourage the discovery of many places often unknown to tourists themselves.

From September, the Pilgrim's Zone, the personal page accessed after registering, will be active. Upon registration, the pilgrim, after entering the required data, will receive the "Pilgrim Card," in digital version, with a personal Qr code needed to access Jubilee events and to organize the pilgrimage to the Holy Door. The use will be intended not only for individuals, but also for those who organize pilgrimages in parish, diocesan or other groups. The Pilgrim Card will also have a second function. With a small offering, pilgrims will be able to acquire the Pilgrim Card, which will offer certain services, allowing them to take advantage of special discounts for the period of the pilgrimage. In recent months, some services in the areas of transportation, catering, reception are being finalized with the respective categories of reference.

Starting September, the following will be officially active and accessible: The **social media pages** and the new **2025 Jubilee App**, *iubilaeum2025*, youthful, new, and user-friendly. From the app, which will be downloadable for iOS and android, one will be able to access all the news already on the website, but the app's interface will make it easier and faster to register for Jubilee events, with the option of receiving personalized information. Users will be able to save the events they are interested in, access their personalized area more quickly, have the Qr code for the pilgrimage to the Holy Door and, of course, in case the Service Card has been purchased, to access the opportunities offered. The app, in essence, will allow the pilgrim a quicker acquisition of information about the Jubilee, facilitate the registration process and speed up the organization of pilgrimages within the city, as well as allow direct communication between the pilgrim and the Dicastery.

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H.E. Msgr. Rino Fisichella – *Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, Section for the Fundamental Questions regarding Evangelization in the World*

We now come to the most delicate objective, which regards the Calendar of the Holy Year. For the opening and closing dates we will have to wait for the Bull of Indiction of the Jubilee, which will be published according to tradition at the Feast of the Ascension, next May 9, 2024. The Ordinary Jubilee will begin with the opening of the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica in December 2024. In the press dossier we prepared, the calendar only covers "major jubilee events". These are those events that by their nature attract a great crowd of people to Rome. I am thinking in particular of the Jubilee of young people, movements, confraternities, catechists, the world of work, schools. In short, a calendar that requires more detailed preparation to allow for an unfolding consistent with the experience of faith. In addition to these events that are likely to involve millions of pilgrims from all over the world, the calendar does not mention the hundreds of jubilee events involving dioceses, parish groups, individual associations and individual pilgrims. Pilgrims, however, will only need to register on the platform accessed from

the website to interact with the Dicastery and be welcomed. On the other hand, as we know, the way of travelling has changed and we must be ready to give due welcome to groups as well as individuals. To facilitate this organization, very large groups, such as dioceses, and to ensure reception, will be asked to contact the Dicastery directly.

To conclude, I would like to announce that starting next June 1, the Pilgrims Center - Info Point will be inaugurated in the premises of Via della Conciliazione 7. A reference point open to those who wish to be informed about the Jubilee Year, the ways of participating, as well as get news on how to become a volunteer or organize their own pilgrimage.

Pope Francis writes, "We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision." These words have helped us in these past months in the preparation of so many initiatives. They will still continue to keep us company in the coming months where other significant deadlines await us. We all wish that the proclamation of hope that comes with the coming Jubilee may be real, concrete and tangible through so many signs of solidarity that will help to recover a more serene and confident outlook on personal and interpersonal relationships, bringing a contribution for a more humane world and a transmission from generation to generation of the living tradition of our faith.
